

From: [Shulman, Elise](#)
To: [Waage, Melissa](#)
Subject: FW: NRDC Poll: Florida Latinos want the government to protect water from pollution (corrected link)
Date: Monday, June 23, 2014 10:04:00 AM

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From: Elise Shulman [mailto:eshulman@nrdc.org]
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Please note corrected link to polling results at the bottom of the release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NRDC Poll: Florida Latinos want the government to protect water from pollution

WASHINGTON (June 23, 2014)—As families prepare to head for the beaches and the great outdoors this summer, a new poll finds that Florida's Latinos overwhelmingly want the federal government to keep our water safe and clean.

The survey of 503 Latinos in the state, conducted last month, showed that 80 percent support nationwide rules to protect wetlands and small streams, including ones that don't flow year-round, that feed into the drinking water supplies of one in three Americans. In Florida, the public drinking water supplies for over 1.8 million residents depend at least partly on such streams. The federal government recently proposed to restore anti-pollution protections to these small streams and nearby wetlands, whose status has been in legal limbo for more than a decade.

"This poll shows that clean water is important to Hispanics, as it is to most other Americans," said Adrianna Quintero, director of Latino outreach for the Natural Resources Defense Council, which commissioned the poll. "In Florida, water is central to our way of life and what makes our state such an important tourist destination. We want the federal government to make sure that polluters don't threaten the health and safety of their families by fouling the water they drink, bathe with, swim in, or use for fishing and boating."

These small streams and wetlands provide crucial water quality benefits for freshwater fishing, boating and swimming, as well as for coastal waters. Eighty-five percent of those surveyed said it was important that strong clean water safety standards be set at the national level, rather than left up mostly to the states. The telephone and Internet poll was conducted by Public Policy Polling, a national firm based in

North Carolina.

Noting that these small streams and wetlands also capture floodwater, filter pollutants, and help feed groundwater that is used for drinking, farming and other businesses, the poll found that 85 percent of respondents said that these waters should have protection from industry pollution. Additionally, 83 percent said they had “very serious” or “somewhat serious” concerns that the uncertain legal status has endangered these waters by allowing companies to avoid preparing oil spill prevention and response plans or by allowing them to bury streams and wetlands under mining or other industrial waste.

The updated Clean Water Act safeguards were proposed this spring by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. They are open for public comment now, and are scheduled to be finalized next year. Floridians interested in commenting may do so at www.waterneedsyou.org . However, industry is trying to get Congress to block the proposals, even before they are final.

The poll results can be found here: http://docs.nrdc.org/water/files/wat_14061801b.pdf

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